

The Argument vpon the first

Epistle of S. Paule the Apostle to the Thessa-
lonians by Des. Erasmus of Rotte-
rodame.



Thessalonica is the principall Citie of Mac-
donia: wherof the inhabitants of the country are cal-
led Thessalonians. They, whan they had once recea-
ued the faith, persisted in it with suche a constancie, that
they suffered, accoꝝdyng to Paules example, persecutions
euen of their owne Citizens, with a glad stomacke and
without chynkyng, so as the false Apostles could turne
them by no manner of perswasion, from the ordinaunce of
the gospel. And yet Paule beeyng afrayed of it, because he knewe the false
Apostles ouerthwartnes wel ynough by experience, inasmuch as he could
not go see them himselfe, he sent Timotheus: by whome, whan he was re-
turned, Paule hauyng reporte of theyr constancie, prayseth them, with than-
kes geuyng to God. This matter he treateth of in the first and second Cha-
piters. In the other three, he instructeth them in sondre offices of godly-
nesse, signyfing vnto them as it were with pynle ynclpunges, that there were
some among them, whiche were not yet altogether pure from all vncleane
demeanoure of lpyng: and that they were not all without suche, as beynge
geuen to loyterynge, were a chargeable burthen to others: and a soꝝte of bu-
syne bobyres that disturbe the quietnesse of theyr congregation, he commaun-
deth to be correcte. Moreover whete some were not of a thzoughly con-
firmed Iudgement as yet, concernyng the resurrection, seying they beway-
led theyr dead frendes, as though they had perished and not rather depar-
ted vnto better promotions, them he enstructeth and confirmeth. And on the
other syde, whete some disputed of the daye of the Lordes commynge, as
though it might well haue bene foreknownen and tolde of before, where as it
is vncertayne to all men: Paule saꝝeth it shal come sodaynly, and whā
no man looketh foꝝ it: to the intent we shoulde be the moꝝe ready
at euery moment. This Epistle he wote from Athenes by
Tichicus a minstre after the grekes wytynges: and
our Latine argumentes saꝝe also, that Onesh-
mus bare hym companye: howbeit there
is no certayne auctour in the com-
mune exemplares.

The ende of the Argument.

¶¶¶.

The paraphrase of Erasmus

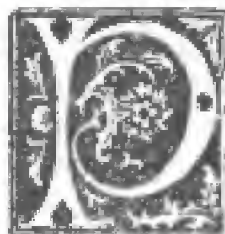
Fol. II.

vpon the first Epistle of the Apostle S.

Paule to the Thessalonians.

The I. Chapter.

Paul and Siluanus and Timothe. vnto the congregation of the Thessalonians, in
God the father, and in the Lorde Iesus Christe. Grace be vnto you, and peace from God the father,
out father, and from the Lorde Iesus Christe. We geue God thanks alwayes for you all, The texts.
making mention of you in our prayers without ceasing, and call you to remembrance be-
cause of the worke of your sayth and labour in loue, and because ye haue continued in the
hope of our Lorde Iesus Christe, in the sight of God our father.



Paul and Siluanus and Timothe, vnto the congregation
of the Thessalonians, consenting together in God the father
and in our Lorde Iesus Christe: wishe vnto you grace and
peace. We reioyce, as it is conuenient we should, for your
good forewardnesse, and render thanks alwayes vnto
God, making mention of all you, on the behalfe of you all,
as often as we talke with God in holy supplications, in
that, it can neuer be out of our myndes, how diligently you trauayled to
defend the profession of your sayth: than what exceeding labour you toke
for the loue, that you beare vnto the preachers of the gospel: how manful-
ly and without shrinking you abode al thinges, through the hope and ex-
pectation of the rewardes, which our Lorde Iesus Christe hath promys-
sed in the lyfe to come, vnto them that for his names sake care not for the
displeasures of this lyfe. You shall not lose the hye of your well do-
inges, for God our father that seeth vpon what respecte you did them, is
he that shall paye the hye.

We knowe brethren (beloued of God) howe that ye are electe. For our gospell came
not vnto you by woordes onely, but also by power, and by the holy ghost, and by much cer-
taintie, as ye knowe, after what maner we behaued our selues among you, for your sake. The texts.
And ye became folowers of vs and of the Lorde receyuing the woordes with much afflic-
tion, with ioy of the holy ghost: so that ye were an ensample to al that beleue in Macedonia
and Achaia. For from you sounded out the woordes of the Lorde, not in Macedonia
and in Achaia onely: but your sayth also whiche ye haue vnto God, spied herselfe abode
in all quarters, so that it needeth not vs to speake any thyng at all. For they themselves
knowe of you, what maner of enterprys we had vnto you & howe ye turned to God from
ymages, for to serue the truing and true God, and for to loke for his sonne from heauen,
whom he raised from death: euen Iesus, whiche deliuereth vs from the wrath to come.

You your selues knowe, welbeloued brethren, that you were not chaun-
ged by the perswasion of man, but that you were chosen to these purposes
euen by the will of God. Neither yet haue we so tenderly preached the
gospell vnto you, as nothyng hath been shewed vnto you sayng bare
woordes, but the power of God hath confirmed our doctrine euen with
evident miracles. And the holy gost was also geue by vs, so that we were
behinde in nothing, that should in any wise make for the persuite beleuyng
of the gospels doctrine. For whatsoever they of Ierowsy attained by other
mens preaching, the same did you also attaine at our gospel teaching. And
in this behalfe, how sincerely, how humbly, and how paynefully we be-
haued our selues among you, you can tell wel ynough. For there was no-
thing wherby we myght wyne you vnto Christe, but we abode it. And
you for yone parte shewed not your selues vntowarde scholars, but you

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle

folowed streyght after the example of vs, yea rather not of vs but of the
 Lorde Iesu, that humbled himselfe so lowe and suffered al thinges, that
 he might wryne vs vnto himselfe. For you haue so hartely embraced our
 gospel preaching, that for the loue of it you haue suffered afflictions pa-
 ciently, howe many and howe greuous soeuer they were, not onely with
 muche boldnesse, but also with muche gladnesse, because the holy goste,
 whom you receyued by our preaching as a pledge for the tyme, of the fel-
 citie to come, hath placed himselfe in your hartes: through hope of which
 felicitie, al sorowes become swete, whatsoeuer are layed vpon vs for the
 gospel of Christe. And the balauntnesse of your sayth was so passing ex-
 cellent, that you were an ensample to al the saythfull in the rest of Ma-
 donia and Achaia. For the example of that noble chiefe citie moued all
 menies myndes so sore, that the same of the gospel sounded as it were the
 noyse of a Trompet wyde and brode, and published the fernencie of your
 sayth, that you haue to Godwarde, not only in Macedonia and Achaia,
 but also in all other countreys: so that now we see it is no neede for vs to
 make repozte of your godlynesse. For if we begynne at any tyme to speake
 of those matters, they are moze readye of theyr owne mynde to tell vs,
 being instructed by the commune bzute, than we can tell them: howe we
 entred firste vnto you to open the Gospels doctrine, and with what dili-
 gent readinesse you receyued vs setting al perils asyde, that seemed like to
 happen vnto you for our sakes, and howe easely you were trayued from
 the supersticion of your forefathers, wherewith you worshipped the ima-
 ges of deuils, vnto the true worshippe of God: so as euer since that tyme
 you abhorre false and dead Gods, and serue the true liuing God: and tru-
 sting vpon his promisses, you passe nothing vpon þ pleasures of this lyfe,
 no moze than you do vpon the displeasures of it: but looke that his sonne
 Iesus (by whom he hath deliuered vs freely vnto saluatiõ, & promised vs
 the rewardes of the lyfe to come) shal come againe from heauen, and geue
 opely vnto the world, the thinges that he hath promised. For God rased
 hym by againe vnto lyfe to this ende, that we might also be rased againe
 vnto lyfe by hym, and to haue the fruition of the good thinges that neuer
 shall dye, which in this life suffer the displeasures of this worlde for his
 sake. And than his commyng shalbe ioyfully welcome vnto vs, inasmu-
 che as he hath cleased vs from our synnes in his owne bloude, and reconciled
 vs vnto God, and deliuered vs from the eternall punishmente that was
 due for our transgressions.

The .ii. Chapter.

The text.

For ye our selues (brethren) knowe of our entraunce in vnto you, howe that it was not
 in baptye: but euen after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated at
 philippos (as ye knowe) then were we bolde in our God, to speake vnto you the gospel
 of God, in muche streyung. For our exhortacion was not to bring you to trowe, nor yet to
 vncleennes, neither was it with gyle: but as we were allowed of God that the gospel shoulde
 be committed vnto vs: euen so we spake, not as they that praise meime, but God, whiche
 reuereth our vertes. Neither led we but conuersation at any tyme with flattering wordes,
 as ye knowe: neither by occasion of courtesynesse. God is recorde: neither sought we
 praise of manne, neither of you, nor yet of any other, when we might haue been in autori-
 tie, as the Apostles of Christe, but we were tendre among you, euen as a nurse cherissheth
 her children, so were we affectioned toward you: our good will was to haue deare vnto
 you, not the gospel of God only: but also our owne soules, because ye were deare vnto vs.

God hat

The Galo-
 nica.

God make
 vs English-
 men ryght
 The Galo-
 nica.



What nedeth vs to make rehersall, seing ye your selues knowe, that albeit we came not vnto you, with bragging and flaring, nor curiously mincing a sorte of great wordes, nor setting out any high Philosophie: Yet our entraunce vnto you was not vneffectuall. But where as wee had suffred many thinges at Philippios befoze, as you your selues knowe, and were shamefully handled with many spightefull rebukes, and so was Silas also, because of casting the prophecieng spirite out of the Damsel, that was possessed: yet neuertheles through the helpe of our God, we were not afrated even to preache the gospel of Christ scelye among you also, and not without exceeding great daungier: wheras in case we had preached a so;ged vayne thyng, we should neuer haue ben in daunger of our head for that matter. For suche men as teachen theyr owne doctrine, and not that, whiche they haue receaued of Christ, and teachen for theyr owne abauantage, intending thereby to disceauce others for theyr owne luckes sake: those haue no aueritie of theyr doctrine at al, and drawe themselves quite a way, as sone as they dyede any daungier of theyr lyues or substance. But the doctrine, wherunto we allured you, was not counterfayted, ne farned, neyther purposed vnto disceate, ne yet vnder colourable pretence of it, we haue cloyed impure sciences, as the false apostles do, nor haue doen any thing fraudulentlie, pretending in outward apperaunce one waye, and purposyng inwardly elene contrarie another waye, and vnder the title of Christe go about our owne pelfe, after the maner of them, that make themselves Apostles: but like as god by his sonne hath chosen vs vnto this office, that we shoulde spicerely preache the gospel committed vnto vs, euen so do we preache vnto all men, not to ceepe in fauour or commendation with menne, but to do our office so as god may allowe it, who seeth the inward secrettes of our hartes, and accordyng thereto esteemeth every man. For we haue not flattered any man, as you know at least, nether haue we turned the word of the gospel, nor your tractable beleuyng in to oure owne gayne, god himselfe is witnesse vnto our consciences: nether haue we hunted after the pypse of men by meanes of the gospel, either at your handes or of any other, wheras we myght haue vsed our aueritie, and brag no lesse than the false Apostles: which though they teachen vayne thinges & to their owne gayne, yet they require to be honoured & waited vpon of you. But we considering what becometh the apostles of Christe, which humbled himself for our saluacions sake, haue not taken vpon vs to brag & loke hygh, but haue shewed our selues gentill & sobye among you, not eagerly abusing you, as disciples, but wth al lenitie bearing with your weaknesse, none other wise than a mother nource would chearthe the tender age of her chyldren: & so we being louingly affected towards you, wer hartely desirous to impart vnto you, not onely the ghospel of god as the foode of your soules, but also to bestowe our owne life: not that we looked for any reward at your handes, but that we loued you entirely with all our hertes, none other wise than a mother loueth her owne chyldren. We vphayd you not of our diligence, but we rehearse our louing affection.

God sende
vs such
preachers.

The terte.

Ye remember brethren our laboure, & trouble. For we laboured hard and myght because we would not be chargeable vnto any of you, & preached vnto you the gospel of god. Ye are witnesses, & so is god, how hoiply & iustly and unblameably, we behoued our selues among you that beleued, as ye knowe, how that we haue such affection vnto every one of
2222-11. you

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle

you, as a father both vnto childe, exhorting, comfortinge, and beseeching you, that ye may be made worthy of God, whiche hath called you vnto his kyngdome and glory. For the cause thanke we God also without ceasinge, because that when ye receaued of vs the word, wherewith ye learned to knowe God, ye receaued it not as the word of man: but such as it was in deede, the word of God, which worketh alwaies in you that beleue.

You remembre brethren, that we forsooke no labour nor no triauell for your sakes, thynking no mynding any other thyng els than your saluacion. And we hunted so litell for rewarde at your handes, that we wrought with our hand labour daye and night, to get out lyuing withal, because we would be a burthen to none of you all. The false apostles cloute in their gospel among you, and wythe to them selues as muche as they can get: and we haue preached the gospel of god vnto you frely without any thing. And you are my witness, and god himselfe is my recorde, how holily, how vprightlye, and how blameable we haue behaued oure selues toward you that beleued, as you know by proued experience, with how synccere a loue we did al thinges, that towardes euery one of you we were euen so affected, as any father is towardes his owne chyldren, now beseeching, now comforting, now charging you, not to geue vs any thing, but to leade a lyfe worthy of god, whiche, when you were afore tyme vnder of all godlynesse, hath called you through fayeth to the studie of true godlinesse, and hath also through tempe: all afflictions, called you into his kingdome and glory Immortal. Al is well: you acknowlage the goodnesse of God: and for that cause we also reder thankes vnto him continuallye, for keepyng your heartes after suche soyte, that when we came in a pooore basse estate vnto you and hauyng no shewe of dignitie to set vs forward, yet as soone as you had hearde the gospel preached of vs, you receaued it, not as a fable or the word of mā, but as the word that came fro god himself, as it was in deede: for he himselfe spake eue by vs.

Therefore.

For ye brethren became folowes of the congregacions of God whiche in Jewrye are in Christ Iesu. For ye haue suffered lyke thynges of your kynsmene, as we our selues haue suffered of the Jewes. Whiche as they kylled the Lord Iesus, and theyr owne prophetes, euen so haue they persecuted vs: and God they please not, and are contrary to all men, and haue vs, that we should not speake vnto the Gentiles, that they might be saued, to fulfill their pynnes alwaies. For the wrath of God is come on them, euen to the vtmost.

The word of man is weake & vneffectual, but the word of god is effectually mightie: which, as soone as you had vnderken of it, was not pble, but began to worke his power in you, so as it might evidently ynough appeare, & you had receaued the same spirite, in & you incontynently began to folow the exāples of the other congregaciōs of god & professed Iesus Christ in Jewrye. That, which Christ: that, that wether that, that the rest of the Jewes whiche embrace the doctrine of the gospel, haue suffered of their owne countrey menne, vnto whome this doctrine is odious, the like haue you also suffered of your owne townes men. For like as they kylled the lord Iesus, & slew his prophetes before him, because they could not abyde the truth: euen so do they also persecute vs that are the true gospel preachers, with such blindnes of harte, that they prouoke euen the wrath of god vpon themselves, because they rebell against his will, & go against all men, as the very enemyes of mankind, & as men that enue al mens saluacion which is offered through faith, & go about to draw all men vnto them into destruccion. For they do not let vs after this sort of any pynate displeasure, but they enuy all the gentiles their wealth, and trouble vs for this intent, that we should not preach the gospel vnto the gentiles

of S. Paul to the Thessalonians. Cap.ii. Fol. lili.

gentiles, wherby they myght be saued: as though it were but a smal matter for the to haue slayne the Prophetes before, and byenby Christ after the Prophetes, except they persecute and dispatch vs out of the waye also: so as they may finish the whole hrape of their mischunes, and say this, as it were the Summe totall of their wickednesse, alwayes to be like mannered to themselves, and neuer to repent from their madnesse. By reason wherof they prouoke the wrathe of God so soze vpon them, that they are to be despaired of, for so much as of a purposed malice they spurne awaie the mercy of God from the, and by al possible meanes oppugne the gospel, thzough whose onely helpe they myght be deliuered from destruction.

For as muche brethern as we are kept from you for a season, as concerning the bodily presence (but not in the heart) we enforced the more to see you personally with great desyre. And therefore we would haue come vnto you, if we coulde and agayne: but Satan with-
The text

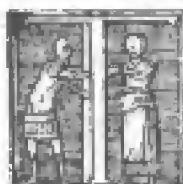
stode vs. For what is our hope or ioy, or reioyng of eternall life, are not yet in the presence of our Lorde Iesus Christes at his cummyng? yea, ye are our glory and ioy. But the more I loue you, brethern, for the readinesse and promptitude of your faythe, the more I am enflamed with the louyng desyre of you, because beyng kepte from you for a tyme, I coulde not haue the fruition of your company, wherof I was wondrously desirous, although we were neuer absent in minde. And yet this coulde not satisfie þe loue that we beare towarde you, except I should also presentlie se you euen with my body-ly eyes. Wherfore I thought it not ynough, to send any bodye to you, or to speake with you by letters, but I Paul went about once and esteones to come to you my selfe, so as I myght the more thzoughly confirme your consciences: But Satan withstode this purposed endeavour, which by the wicked Jewes hyndred my cummyng vnto you. And what maruaile is it, though I bee so desirous of you? For what other thyng is there in this world, wherewith I can content my selfe, wherof I may aduance my selfe, wherof I maye perswade my selfe to inherite felicitie? I desie all thinges in comparison of the gospel of Christ. Than what is our hope, or what is our ioye, or what is our crowne? Among others of the gentiles whom I haue wonne vnto Christ, are not you also? albeit not in the sight of the worlde, yet verily it is with the Lorde Iesus Christ. Whan the enemyes of the gospell are thzowen vnder foote, and the triumphe openly kepte at his cummyng, what ensignes and what other tokens of victozy shal I bring forth in that royall company, but you and suche other like as you be? In the meane tyme I am assured hope of these thinges. You are the fruite &
The text

The.iii. Chapter.

Wherfore, sence we coulde no longer forbear, we thought it good to remayne at Athens alone, and sent I pmothe our brother & minister of God, and the helper forth of our labour in the gospel of Christe to stablish the you: and to comforte you concerning our faith, that no man should be moued in these afflictions. For ye your selues knowe, that we are euen appointed therunto. For when we were with you, we tolde you before, that we should suffer tribulation, euen as it came to passe, and as ye knowe. For this cause when I coulde no longer forbear, I sent, that I might haue knowledge of your faith, lest by some meanes the tempter had tempted you, and lest our labour had bene bestowed in vayne.

Therefore

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle



Herfore, inasmuche as we coulde not suffer the wante of you any longer, and scryng I coulde not come my selfe to you, I thought it good, to doe that by my mooste saythfull companion, that I coulde not doe by my selfe: and to put him in steede of my selfe. Therfore we taried still alone at Athenes, and from thence sente Tymothe our brother, a tryed minister of God, and an helpeselow of our office, which we haue to doe in the gospel of Christ: because we had leauer wante the comforte of that to deare a singular and so necessarie a companion for the tyme, than to geue occasion that you should thinke we had utterly geuen ouer lokyng to your state of thinges. And verily we haue sente hym, not for any cause of our owne, but chiefly for your sakes, that he myght establishe and comforte your consciences, and to shew you, that for all these paynfull afflictions, wherewith I am tossed heretwawe and theretwawe, myne harte is nothing discouraged, but the gloire of the gospel is a great deale better auanced, lesse any of you shoulde be dismayed, by reason of myne afflictions, whiche you heare tell of. For you must not thinke it any neweltie, though these thinges happen to the preachers of the gospel, in asmuche as you knewe a good while agoe, that I was chosen of god to this same ende, that through sufferynge of afflictions of my body, I myght auance the name of Christ: and so in this behalfe to be like my Lord and master. For euen then whan we were present with you, we tolde you the same befoze, that we should suffer affliction for the gospels sake. And as I tolde you befoze it should be, so you see it now happened, like as also you haue knowen it happen befoze. As for me, there was nothing hapened vnto me vnlodged for, nor any thig that I tolde not you of afore, so as you haue the lesse cause to be discouraged. Wherfore, considering that for the great care I take for you (euen whan all thing is at the surest) I coulde not be quiet but long after you still, I sent Tymothe (as I sayed afore) for this purpose, that by hym (as well in a maner as I were present theremy selfe) I might knowe the stedfastnesse of your sayth, and might trye, yf he that kepeth continually watche to subuerthe them that be good, had tempted any of the weaker sorte of you, and so in them my labour had been losse.

The first.

But nowe lately, when Tymothe came from you vnto vs, and declared to vs your sayth and loue, and how that ye haue good remembraunce of vs alwaye, desyring to see vs as we also desyre to see you. Therfore brethren we receiued consolaciō by you, in al our aduersitie and necessitie through your sayth. For nowe are we alpe, yf ye stande stedfast in the Lord. For what thanks can we recompence to God agayne for you, ouer al that for, that we say for your sakes before our God: prayyng night and daye exceedingly, that we might see you presently, and might fully li the thynges which are lackyng vnto your sayth: God hymselfe our father, and our Lord Iesus Christ shall gyde our iourney vnto you: the Lord also shall increase you and make you stowe ouer in loue one towards another, and to be all men, such as we be toward you: that he may make your heartes stable and vnbloameable, in holynes before God our father, at the comynge of our Lord Iesus Christ with al sayntes.

But whan Tymothe of late returned from you to vs agayne, and brought vs mery tydings, shewing that you persist as well constanly in your sayth without shyking, as also that your vnfeyned charitie is the same that it was, and that our breyng a sondre hathe not brought vs out of remembraunce with you, but that you haue vs in mynde alwayes continually,

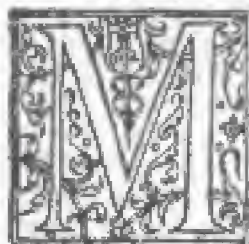
cōtinually, and that you are euer desirous to see vs, as we are to see you: there is no necessitie nor any sorowe, that I am pressed withall, but I can beare it patiently sence I knowe that you abode constantly in your fayth, whiche when I was afrayed of, I was nothing afrayed of my selfe. For I thinke that I am altogether safe, if your fayth continue safe. Nowe we liue, and thinke our selves deliuered from al maner of daunger, in case you, through the helpe of Christ Iesu, perseuer constantly in y^e you haue begun. It p^roketh not me to suffre these euils, so that the frutes be answerable in you, for whose sakes I abyde them. Whiche thyng, for asmuch as I perceiue to be in debte, so as the gospel groweth in acquayntaunce among the Gentiles dayly more and more, what thanks woorthy so great a benefite are we able to redye vnto God: by whose goodnes so excellent to y^e, wherewith we reioyce withal our hartes for your forward proceeding, chaunceth vnto vs euen among these sorowes, our God bearyng recorde of the same, vnto whose goodnesse you are bounde for that you continue stedfast: of whome oure ductie is in our prayers daye and nighte, to desyre this thing in more ample wiske, that by his mercy we may at one tyme or other see you agayne. For with personall presence, some thing is doen, that nother letters nor messenger, how trustie so euer he be, can be hable to accomplishe. For this cause sake therfore, I am desirous to see you, to the intent if any gospellyke discipline be wanting, I might supplie it and amende it. Furthermore my prayer is, that where I canot so doe by meanes of wicked perfoxes, God himselfe our father and his sonne Iesus Christe our Lorde would vouchesafe to take awaye those lettes, & open me a free passage vnto you, and also in the meane season so to encrease you with his gyftes, that I may see you to my great comforte. Whiche thyng shall be, in case he make you aboundaunte and plenteouse in mutuall charitie among your selues: and not among your selues only, but also to warde all men, like as we also haue a certayne excellencie of loue towarde all you, being ready euen to suffre death for your saluacion: and that he would so confirme your consciences, that your byrightnesse cannot be blamed on any behalfe, not only with me, but muche rather with God the father, whom nothing escapeth, in the cumming of our Lorde Iesus Christe, at which time it shall openly appeare in the sight of all Saintes, not only what euery one hath doen, but also with what conscience euery one hath done it.

¶ The iiii. Chapter.

Furthermore, he beseecheth you (brethren) and exhorteth you by the Lord Iesus, that ye increase more and more, euen as ye haue receyued of vs, how ye ought to walke and to please God. For ye knowe what commaundementes he gaue you by our Lord Iesus Christe. For this is the will of God euen your holynes, that ye should abstaine from fornication, and that euery one of you should knowe how to kepe his vessel in holynes & honour, enor in the lute of concupiscence as doe the hethen, which knowe not God, that no man opresseth and be-
traide his brother in bargayning: because that the Lord is the auenger of all such thinges, as we tolde you before, and testified. For God hath not called vs vnto viciennes, but vnto holynes. Be therfore that helpeth, helpeth not man, but God, whiche hath sente his holy spirit among you.

The text.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle



O prouer brethren we beseeche and exhort you by the
Lorde Iesus, forasmuche as you are nowe sufficiently
taught of vs, after what sorte you ought to behaue
your selues, and with what endeouours to please God;
geue your diligence not only to perseuer still in that you
haue learned, but also to excede your selues in dayly en-
creases of forwarde nesse. for you knowe and remem-

ber what preceptes I gaue, not by the autoritie of my selfe, but by the au-
toritie of our Lorde Iesus Christe. I gaue none of these thynges in com-
maundement that the false Apostles cloude in among you, of the ceremo-
nies of Moses lawe, of the excellencie and visions of Angels, as though
there were entrance by them vnto saluation: but those thynges only that
I knewe certaynly to be acceptable vnto God. For this is the will of
God, that you kepe your selues holy and vnspeckled, and not onely to be
chaste in soule, but also in body, that you may abstayne from whoredome
wherewith the bodies are defiled. The body is the dwelling house of the
soule, and the soule is the Iune of God. Than lyke as it is necessarie for
the soule to be pure, because of the greaue God: so is it decenre for the bo-
dy to be pure because of the inhabitant, the soule. Therfore let every one
knowe howe to geue this honour to his selfe carcas, as a fragile vessel;
that he kepe it cleane and undefiled: and not suffre it to be speckled with
the disease of filthy desyres and lustes: whiche thyng is so farre vnwoor-
thy the state of Christians, that it is the state of no nation of people, but of
them that haue no knowlage of God, but thinke that every one may law-
fully doe what he lusteth without punishment, and that all is honest that
is pleasaut to the body. But the mischefe of lust doubleth his mischefe,
in case a man Ioyne it with the Inurie of his brother: as whan a man vi-
surpeth an other mannes wyfe. Let no manne therfore eithr in this case
or in other matters, in vsurpyng ouermuche to hymselfe, defraude his
brother, inasmuche as God will suffer none of these thynges vnreruenged:
and seying that baptisme shal not onely not abate them that commit these
offences, but also make to their more greuous punishment, lyke as we
haue tolde & recorded vnto you before. For God hath not called vs from
the ordinaunce of our former lyfe, to the entente that beyng once washen
cleane we should be walowed into the same filthynesse again: but to main-
teyne in holynesse and puritie of lyfe the innocencie that was once free-
ly geuen vs. And that we should not through filthy desyres cast away
from vs the holy ghoste, whiche is the louer of Chastitie.

These matters (I say) I haue both recorded and doe recozde again, that
they are not the preceptes of me but of God: so that whosoever contem-
neth them, contemneth not man which is the warning geuer, but God that
is the commaundement maker: who hath empacted his holy spirite vnto
you, for this purpose, that you should by his inspiration embrace godli-
nesse. Against this holy spirite every one woorthely dispire, that through fil-
thy lustes polluteth his owne body.

This is the
will of god
euen your
holynesse.

The sexte.

But as touchyng brotherly loue, ye nebe not, that I wypte vnto you. For ye are taught
of God, to loue one an other, ye and that thing verily ye doe vnto all the brethren whiche
are in all Macedonie. We beseeche you brethren, that ye encrease more and more, & that

ye study

of S. Paule to the Thessalonians. Cap. iiii. Fol. bi

ye shoulde be quiete, and to melle with your owne busines, and to worke with your handes, as we commaunded you: that ye may behaue your selues honestly toward them that are without, and that nothing be lacking vnto you.

Furthermoze, as conceyning the loue that christians owe to christians, I thinke it not necessarie for me to admonishe you by these my letters. For you are taught immediatlye from heauen by the spirite of Christ (wherof you haue tasted) that ye should loue one another. Whiche thing you declare in very dede, in that you loue all the brethren with a christian loue, not onelye that are at Thessalonica, but also in al Macedonia. Myne exhortacion therfore shall not be vnto you, to do the thyng that you do of your owne accord, but in that, that you do by admonicion of the spirite, to excede your selues, and go forwarde alwayes better and better. And looke you geue circumspect hede, that your quietnesse be not interrupted by meanes of idle persons, and suche as be curious meddlers of other mennes matters, but let euerye one applie his owne businesse. And yf any want subsaunce wherof to liue, let hym prouide with his owne handes, so as he maye bothe helpe hymselfe, and releue them that be nedie, like as we commaunded you before: to the intent ye mighte behaue your selues honestlye towardes them, that haue not professed Christ: at whose handes it were shame for your profession, either to begge or to do any vncomelter thyng for nedde. But rather let euery one get with his handes, so as he want no necessary thyng. And that man is easily satisfied, that is content with a litle.

It woulde not becomen that ye should be ignorant concerning them which are fallen asleepe, that ye sorrowe not as other do, which haue no hope. For yf we beleue that Christ dyed, and rose agayne: euen so them also which slepe by Jesus, will God bring agayne with hym. For this sake we write vnto you in the wordes of the Lorde, that we which shal liue, and stail remayne in the comyng of the Lorde, shall not come ere they which slepe. For the Lorde hymselfe shall descende from heauen, with a shout, and the voyce of the Archangell and trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which shal liue (euen we which shal remayne) shall be caught vp with them also in the cloudes, to meete the Lorde in the ayre. And so shall we euer be with the Lorde. Wherefore, comforte your selues one another with these wordes.

Finally, as touchyng the mystery of the resurrection, I cannot be content to haue you ignorant, lest ye should make importune sorrowfull mourning for them, that slepe in the truste of the promyses of the gospell, as though they perished: that you should not mourne. I saye, after the example of the gentiles, whiche bewaile the death of theyr frendes, because they haue no hope of theyr resurrection. But the death of christians is nothing els but a slepe, from the whiche they shall awake agayne at the comyng of Christ, to liue a great deale moze blisefully. For why shoulde we not truste, the same thyng to come to passe in the membes, that we knowe alreadye perswained in the heade: for if we beleue verely, that Jesus was deade after þe maner of man, & rose agayne to immortall life, it foloweth of necessite, that we ought to beleue also, that god the father, whiche raysed vp Jesus, will also bring with him those that professed Jesus and slept in the assured truste of his promyses, aloue agayne at the comyng of his sonne, so as the heade shal not wante his membes. We tale not vnto you an humayne fable, but we tell you the thyng that we learned of Christe hymselfe, that is to wete, that we, which shal be founde remaining aloue in this world at the lordes comyng, shall

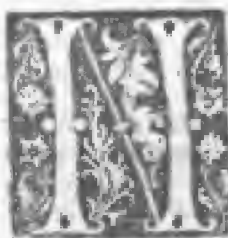
The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle

shal not be presented in the sight of Iesus, before that they which were dead afore, be presented also. Some wil say: how shal it be possible for them to be presented, that were buried and turned into duste? Euen the Lorde Iesus himselfe by the voyce of the aungell soundyng out of heauen with the trumpet of God shal rase them vp and warne them to awake and come quick: ly. And than suche as had slept in this hope, shal returne a gayne vnto lyfe, and ryse out of theyr graues. And that doen, we that shal remaine and be founde alvye in the cumming of Christ, shal be sodainly taken vp together with them that are raised againe vnto life, through the cloudes, that we may mete the Lorde in the ayre. And from thence he shal carrie vs with him into heauen, to liue with him perpetuallie. Now therfore, see you comfort euery one another with these sayinges, so as the death of the godly were you not to loze, inasmuche as it is more woorthy of congratulations and reioyces, than your sorowfull lamentacions.

The .v. Chapter.

The text.

Finally of the tymes and seasons (brethren) it is no neede that I write vnto you: for ye your selues knowe perfectly, that the daye of the Lorde shal come, euen as a thefe in the night. For when they shal saye, peace, and all thynges are safe, then shall sudden destruction come vpon them: as sorow cometh vpon a woman trauayling with chylde: & they shal not scape. But ye brethren are not in darckenes, that that daye should come on you as a thefe.



Might you haue the manner and order of the resurrection, inasmuche as it was conuenient for you to knowe it. But as for the tymes and the very seasons when these thynges shal be, it is no parte of our office to write vnto you. And it is so vnaunpleable, that euen the lord himself would open no suche thyng vnto his disciples when they demaunded it of hym. For you knowe playnly, and we haue taught you before, that the daye of the Lorde shal come sodainly vpon the world vnlooked for, euen as a thefe in the night, breaketh in vpon them that are asleepe: and shal ouerlape them that ate careles, than mooste chiefly, when it shal be the least looked for. For when suche as belue not the gospel, shal saie in theyr mooste folye, there is no daungier, but all is peace and safe, the Lorde wyl not come: than theyr destruction shal come sodainly vpon them, like as a woman with childe is sodainly payned with sorowe in her trauayle, before the daye cometh that she looked for. And they shal haue no waye to escape oppression, before they fele it sodainly vpon them. That daye shal be a dreadfull daye, to them that beyng blinded in theyr owne viciousnes, leaue their lyfe as it were in the night: but vnto you brethren, it is not so dreadfull lest it should take you vnprouyded.

The text.

Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the daye. We are not of the night neither of darckenes. Therefore let vs not sleepe as do other: but let vs walke, and be sober. For they that sleepe, sleepe in the night, and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. But let vs which are of the daye, be sober, armed with the breast plate of faith and loue, & with hope of saluation for an helmet. For God hath not appointed us to prouoke wrath vnto oure selues, but to obtayne saluation by the meanes of oure Lord Iesu Christ, to whiche bydeth vs: that whether we walke or sleepe, we should liue together with hym. Wherefore, comforte your selues together, and edifye euery one another, euen as ye do.

of S. Paule to the Thessalonians. Cap. v. Fol. vii.

For all you that folowe Chyſte, belong not to the kynngdome of darkenes but to the kynngdome of light and of god, namely of our diligence of godlyneſſe be aunſwerable to our profeſſion, and of we lye ſo, as it maye appere that we watche in the dayelight and not lye ſlourtyng in darkenelle. Therfore if we wil not be taken vnwiſes, let vs not ſcape, as other do, that haue no knowlage of Chyſtes lycht: but let vs watche and be ſobyte, taking alwayes circumspect hede, that we comit nothing throughe vnaduisedneſſe, that maye offende the eyes of God and men. For like as they that ſleepe after the bodie, ſcape in the night, and thoſe that are wnedrunken, are drunken in the night: euen ſo thoſe that pwayne and ſlumbye in naughtineſſe, are occupied in darkenelle of the ſoule, and thoſe that are drunken with the luſtes & baliaunces of the woꝛlde are entangled with darkenes of the mynde. But as for vs vnto whom the date of the goſpel hath caſt his light, it ſtandeth vs in hande to be ſobyte and watchyng, alwayes prepared and ready agaynſt the ſodayne aſſaulte of the enemye, that kepeth continuall watche for our deſtruction: and to be harneſſed with ſpirituall armour: In Reade of a byſſe plate to put on fayth and charitie: for the helmet, hope of eternaſſe ſaluacion. And than ſhall you not nede to diſtruſte. God will be ready himſelfe to deſend thoſe that be watching. For god hath not called vs to the doctrine of the goſpell for this purpoſe, that luyng otherwyſe than it maketh mention, we ſhould double the wrathe and vengeance of God vpon vs, but that in obeying hym we might obteyne ſaluacion, by the helpe of our Lorde Jeſus Chyiſt, who ſuffred death for vs, to the intent, that if it chaunce vs to lye, we maye lye with hym throughe godlyneſſe and hope of immortalicie, and if it chaunce vs to dye, we maye lye with hym neuer to dye. To thintent that you maye ſo do moꝛe and moꝛe, encourage every one other with mutuall exhortacions, and ſpyre one another to goe on forwarde, like as you do alreedye euen of your owne accord.

We beſeche you brethren that ye knowe them which laboure among you, and haue the ouerſight of you in the Lorde, and geue you exhortacion, that ye haue them in the reſpectacion theſe ſoule, for theye woꝛkes ſake, and be at peace with them. The teſte.

Furthermoꝛe we beſeche you, brethren, to haue coſideracion of them, that labour among you, and haue ouerſight of you in teaching of the goſpell, and do admoniſhe you with what thynges you ought to pleaſe Chyiſt: that where you are bounden to geue honoure vnto all men, yet haue them in reſpecte aboue others, requiting the the ſoule, that they beſtow vnto you in ſuffering ſo many laboures and daunglers for your ſakes. And of they teſpue you for your faultes at any tyme, yet haue peace with them. For he is not worthy to be hated, that repproueth a man for his proſite.

We beſeech you (brethren) warne them that are vnwiſe, comforte the feeble mynch, lifte vp the meake, be patient towardes all men. Se that none recompence euill for euill vnto any man: but euer folowe that, whiche is good, both among your ſelues, and to all men. It is the cure, as ſaye continually. In all thynges geue thanks. For this is the will of God throughe Chyiſt Jeſu towardes you. Quenche not the ſpिरित. Deſpyſe not prophecies. Examine all thynges, hope that whiche is good. Abſtayne from all euil apperance. Let brotherly love of peace ſanctifie you throughe out. And I praye God that your whole ſpirit, and ſoule and bodye, maye be perfected: ſo that in nothing ye maye be blamed in the The teſte.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle

commynge of our Lorde Iesus Christ. I sayth Paul is he whiche called you, whiche will also do it. Brethren, praye for vs. Greete all the brethren with an holy kysse. I charge you in the Lorde, that this epistle be red vnto all the holy brethren. The grace of the Lorde Iesus Christ be with you. Amen.

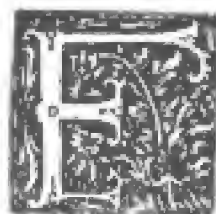
And thus I beseeche you (euery man accordyng to his habyllite) to lape your helpyng handes to the fowwardyng of their offices. Admonishe them that lyue after their owne lustes and disquiet the ordye that you obserue. Comforte the weake harted, releue the feble, be gentill and paciēt towardes all men, not onely towardes the Christians, but also them that are straungers from Christ. Beware that none recompense wrong for wrong, no; requitte euill dede for euill dede. For truly it is vnsempng to folowe the example of naughty persones in a naughty matier, and become lyke condicōned vnto them. But rather geue diligence to do good vnto all folkes, not onely the christians vnto christians, but also vnto all maner of folkes, whether they haue deserued it or not deserued it: theyng certapnly assured, þ your diligence shall not be lost: for Christ is your suertie. In consideration wherof, whatsoeuer chaunceth vnto you, reioyce alwayes so that godlynesse bee safe: call vpon God with your prayets continually without ceassyng, and geue thanks whatsoeuer befalleth you. For so it standeth with gods pleasure, that there shall be occasion alwayes, to renbye thanks vnto the father for his bounteousnes to youwarde by Iesus Christe. And this furthermoze standeth you in hande to take hede of, that no varsaunce rise among you by reason of euery ones sondre sortes of gistes. Vnto some one chaunceth the gift of tongues, to spynge in the spirite: albeit it is but a gift of the basest sorte, yet quenche it not in any wise, but cherishe it rather, þ it maye profite better and better. Vnto some chaunceth the giste of prophete, to declare the mysticall sence of the scripture: reiecte it not in any wyse whatsoeuer is spoken. Suffer the one paciently that he maye go on fowwarde, heare the others sentence, with iudgement: but after suche sorte that he be not to muche molested in his speakyng. Let no mā make so muche of his owne gistes, that he cōtemne another mannes. Trye al thynges, but let euery man holde the thing that he iudgeth requisite. Whatsoeuer it be that hath þ similitude of a good thyng, is not to be despised. Nor withstandyng it behoueth you to abhoire so muche from euill, that you ought to absteyne euen from those thynges, that haue the shewe of euill. But vnto these matters, it shall be your parte to applye all your diligent studies. And god the auctour of peace, vnto whō is acceptable both the lyke consent of mynde & the like speache of wordes that mē do wholy vble together in suche thynges as be honest, byng to passe, þ you maye be perfytely holy & vnspotted, so as the soule maye be answerable vnto the spirite, the body answerable to the soule. & the spirite selfe answerable to God: þ there be nothyng to fynde you faultie in, & that you maye styll perseuer in this state of holynesse continually, vntil the cummyng of our lord Iesus Christ. There is no cause for you to distruste of. For he is sure of his promyse, that hath called you vnto this holynesse, & to the rewardes of the same: he hymselfe shall finish that he hath begonne, and performe that he hath promysed. Brethren, helpe you fowwarde with your prayets the labours that we go aboute. Salute all the brethren with a kysse, not suche a one as the commune sorte of salutations doe geue, but with an holy kysse
and

of S. Paul to the Thessalonians. Cap. v. Fol. bñil.
and worthy Christian loue. I charge you by the Lorde, that this Epistle
be rehearsed to al the holy byethzen. The grace and beneuolent fauour of
our Lorde Iesu Chriſte be alwayes with you. Amen.

Thus endeth the paraphraſe vpon the firſt Epistle
of S. Paul the Apoſtle to the
Thessalonians.

The Argument vpon the ſeconde

Epistle of S. Paul the Apoſtle to the Theſſa-
lonians by Del. Eraſmus of Rote-
rodame.



Erasmuche as Paul coulde not haue libertie to goe see the
Thessalonians aſayue, he confirmeth their conſciences by
Epistle, that they myght manfully ſuffre the afflictions
layed vpon them for Chriſtes ſake: ſeeyng that they ſhall
not want reward, nor the aduerſaries eſcape puniſhment. A-
gaine, concerning the daye of the Lordes cummyng, wherof
he touched ſomewhat in the farther Epistle, he warneth them that they be
not ſtyrred with the ſaynges of ſome, that affirme as though it were at
hande: and as ſome thinke ſignifieth cloſely that the Empire of Rome
muſt be firſt diſpatched and Antichriſte to come after that. Mozeouer he
beateh into theyr heades very earnestly, to reſtrayne ſuche as with
their idlenes & nice curioſitie haue been diſturbers of the com-
mune quietnes and oꝛdꝛ: and to enfoꝛce them vnto la-
bour, in aſmuch as Paul himſelfe laboured among
them with his owne handes. This Epistle he
wrote from Athens by theſame men that he
ſente the farther Epistle by, as it
is recoꝛded by our argu-
mentes. BSBb.ii.

The ende of the argumente.